

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3049

ANSWERED ON:20.03.2008

STATUS OF CLASSICAL LANGUAGE TO TELUGU

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Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the criteria for conferring 'Classical Language' status on a language;
- (b) the number of Indian languages conferred the status so far and the languages identified for the purpose;
- (c) whether there is demand for conferring the 'Classical Language' status to any other languages;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Union Government has received a demand from State Government of Andhra Pradesh to confer classical language status to Telugu; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) As per Notifications issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the criteria for classification of a language as a 'Classical Language' is as under :

- (i) High antiquity of its early texts/ recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years.
- (ii) A body of ancient literature /texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.
- (iii) The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community.
- (iv) The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.

(b) Two languages, Tamil and Sanskrit, have been classified as Classical Languages.

(c) & (d) Yes, Sir. There is a demand for conferring the Classical Language status to Kannada and Telugu.

(e) & (f) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Culture has received several proposals for according Classical Language status to Telugu, which also includes the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.